

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT WORKPLAN AND UPDATE

The Flexible and Adaptive Management project (Adaptive Management project) is one of three special projects for which the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) has received dedicated funding. The objective of the Adaptive Management project is to identify and apply management innovations that allow for more timely and efficient responses to a changing environment. Possible examples include new/updated decision-making frameworks or revised processes that enable quicker management response times in the face of rapidly changing conditions. As part of this agenda item, Council staff will provide an update on project planning. The Council may provide initial guidance on priority issues and actions for consideration under the Adaptive Management project.

Background

Along with one of the Council's other special projects (see Agenda Item C.3, Socioeconomic Framework Workplan and Update), the Adaptive Management project follows up on a recommendation from the Council's Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Climate and Communities Initiative (CCI) [scenario planning exercise](#), completed in March 2021. A core theme that emerged from this scenario planning effort was interest in building more flexibility into the fishery management process; this theme is also reflected in the CCI's overarching goal to consider, develop, and implement strategies for improving management flexibility and responsiveness.

In response to the CCI's overarching goal and scenario planning results and recommendations, the Council added Potential Future FEP Initiative 2.8 (*Assess Flexibility in Fisheries Management Process Initiative*) to its [Ecosystem Initiatives Appendix](#) to the FEP in September 2022. Potential Initiative 2.8 asks whether Council decision-making and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) review and regulatory processes should be made more dynamic in order to respond to rapidly changing environmental conditions, and serves as the foundation for the Adaptive Management project considered under this agenda item.

During the development of project proposals, iteration between Council staff and NMFS headquarters made clear that NMFS desired the implementation of a management measure or change in Council process as part of these projects. As such, the Council's Adaptive Management project calls for the implementation of a to-be-determined action or actions, to be substantially completed by the end of the funding period (2027).

For Council Consideration at the April 2025 Meeting

In a Supplemental Attachment under this agenda item, Council staff will provide a report that describes some existing tools and approaches to increase flexibility and responsiveness in Council processes, including examples of challenges from each of the Council's FMPs that adaptive management may help to mitigate or resolve. This would be an initial review of both tools and challenges, with the expectation that a more comprehensive exploration could be undertaken as part of the Adaptive Management project. Advisory Bodies may also identify actions, measures,

and processes in their respective FMPs that could benefit from more nimble and adaptive management approaches.

This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Council to review and discuss this input and any associated recommendations from Advisory Bodies regarding flexibility and adaptive management and consider whether it would like to identify priority actions to focus on as it moves forward with implementing the Adaptive Management project.

Council Tasks:

- 1. Consider Adaptive Management project updates.**
- 2. Review and discuss opportunities to build additional adaptive management into the Council's FMPs.**
- 3. Provide initial guidance on priority issues and actions for consideration under the Adaptive Management project, as appropriate.**

Reference Materials:

1. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- C.4 Adaptive Management Workplan and Update Gilly Lyons
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Consider Project Updates and Provide Guidance on Next Steps

PFMC
03/24/25